



YEAR IN REVIEW



Professor Michael Kalloniatis

Globally, 2020 was a challenging year, but it one that served to highlight the resilience, innovation and ability to adapt of us all – referrers, patients, students, collaborators and the entire CFEH team alike.



Despite the challenges faced, our focus in 2020 was always on the goal of reducing preventable blindness through clinical service delivery, research and education.

Probably the most thought-provoking development of 2020 was the release of an independent review of the Centre's operations by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC). This concluded that CFEH has prevented 10,300 Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs), including preventing 112 deaths. Put into perspective, this is the equivalent of preventing 17,200 years lived with blindness and financial savings to society of \$261 million. These findings quantify the immense value of the unique CFEH model in the early prevention and detection space.

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- An independent PwC review concluded that over 10 years, CFEH has prevented 17,200 years of living with blindness.
- We celebrated the opening of the Cameron Centre which will provide CFEH and Guide Dogs services to the residents of Western Sydney.
- CFEH commenced a collaboration with Westmead Hospital through the C-Eye-C program.
- Achieved an 18% increase in the number of patients examined compared with 2019.
- New research grants announced.
- Postgraduate and undergraduate courses run through UNSW.

With this in mind, we moved forward with a sense of great purpose in 2020. Early in the year we celebrated the opening of the Cameron Centre with Guide Dogs and the launch of the new CFEH clinic that will bring much needed assessment and management services to Western Sydney and the chance for CFEH to work with Guide Dogs in the provision of low vision services. We also started collaborating with the Westmead Hospital ophthalmology department through A/Prof Andrew White's Community Eye Care (C-Eye-C) program, providing co-management services to the residents of the Western Sydney Health District.

CFEH clinical services evolved in 2020 to meet the demands of a COVID-19 environment. Clinic hours were extended to allow for greater social distancing and several operational changes made to increase efficiencies. As a result, our team completed 10,930 appointments in 2020 – a 12% increase on 2019 – achieved despite our temporary reduction in capacity during the height of the pandemic in Australia. Much of this growth was fueled by increased demand for our ocular health management services and expanded collaborations with Prince of Wales Hospital in glaucoma management, clinic review pathways and screening for eye complications secondary to systemic medications.

CFEH clinical services are necessarily interrelated with both research and education at the Centre. Research activities help to inform clinical practice, and teaching activities provide evidence-based education to both optometry students and our referrers.

In 2020, two new sources of funding were announced to support our research - a grant from Novartis Australia and New Zealand to support a project relating to barriers to care in age-related macular degeneration, and funding stemming from a Cooperative Research Centre Project (CRC-P) involving a consortium of companies including CFEH, led by Big Picture Medical.

Throughout the year, our education team delivered both undergraduate and postgraduate courses through the school of Optometry and Vision Science (UNSW), launched a new online learning portal and started work on an online reference tool focussed on posterior eye disease and multimodal imaging, to be released in 2021.

On an operational front, a new Head of Research A/Prof Gordon Doig and a new Executive Manager, Sarah Holland were appointed to help guide the Centre into the future. Their collaborative approach and respective expertise will help CFEH evolve into the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Without the foresight and financial support of Guide Dogs, the prevention of 17,200 years lived with blindness would never have been possible. With their ongoing support, we are optimistic about the future of CFEH and look forward to making further inroads towards our goal of reducing preventable blindness together.

Guide Dogs.

